

Nebraska Herbal Society

November-December 2023



Both leaves and stems of the pineapple sage plant are edible; leaves and flowers can be used to make tea, jellies or potpourri.

Photo: North Carolina Extension

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Late-blooming pineapple sage is worth the wait

Co-president Janet Lindsteadt

A red flower that always is late to bloom in my garden, but always one of my favorites that is worth the wait, is the herb pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*).

My plant has the scarlet flowers which are in whorls with four blossoms at each node opening sequentially up the flower spike. Each 1-2" long flower has an upper lip and a spreading lower lip, typical of salvias. Flowers are followed by small, dark-colored football-shaped seeds that fall out within a few days. The pineapple sage plant is found in gardens to attract hummingbirds and butterflies. The crushed plant leaves smell like pineapple. Pineapple sage grows rapidly in a location with morning sun and afternoon shade. Mine was completely covered by mint, and once I pulled it, the pineapple sage plant really took off. Both the leaves and flowers are edible and when fresh can be

used whole as a garnish or in salads or desserts. As an herb the leaves and flowers can be used to make a tea. Both leaves and flowers can also be used in jellies or for potpourri. It also makes a striking sage herbal vinegar.

We are finishing up this year and looking forward to 2024, there have been so many creative presentations. As NHS co-presidents, Jill and I will be handing the gavel over to new President Jane McGee. I am looking forward to the continued success of learning more about the wonderful world of herbs!

"The leaves fall, the wind blows and the farm country slowly changes from the summer cottons into its winter wools." — *Henry Beston*

Nov. 18, 2023, NHS Agenda

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
8320 South St.

9:30-10 Social Time

10-10:20 Business Meeting

Election of the 2024 Board

Nominations:

President, Jane McGee

Secretary, Pam Knott

Treasurer, Mary Andelt

Program, Jenni Dougherty/Jill Kuhel

Newsletter Cheryl Irwin

Membership, Ann Lif/Kathy Dawes

Plant Sale, Janet Buck

10:20-10:30 Herb of the Month

Hibiscus by Jill Kuhel

10:30-10:50 Cooking Around the World

Baklava by Marilyne Phelps

10:50-11:30 Program

Member Project: Ornaments/table decorations

11:30-Noon Social Time; Board meeting. Bring

officer materials to pass on to new board members.

Dec. 2 (see notice at right)

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
8320 South St.

1-4 p.m. catered lunch,
preregistration only; gift exchange



Hello NHS Members,

For our December Holiday Luncheon, we are very pleased that Kat Davis will again be catering. If you have attended these luncheons in the past, you know the food is not only delicious but beautiful, too. We are also very pleased to let you know this year the luncheon is complimentary for all members. You may bring a guest, but the guest must pay \$25, payable at the November meeting or Dec. 2.

The date/time is different from our regularly scheduled meetings so we wanted to be sure you had this information on your calendar:

Date: Dec. 2 Time: 1-4 p.m.

Please arrive by 1 p.m. as you'll need time to check in, get seated and pour yourself some hot tea so lunch can be served shortly after 1 p.m. We will be meeting in the front meeting room, the large room to the right of the Aldersgate church entrance.

If you'd like to participate in the optional gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift (suggested \$10 value). Last year there were lots of unique gifts and I'm sure this year will be no different! The program will be a "Year in Review" presentation and we will have some give-aways, too.

The caterer needs a final count of attendees a week before the luncheon, so we need you to RSVP by **NOVEMBER 23** so we can get this information to Kat in a timely manner. If you have problems accessing the Sign Up page please send email to NEHERBALSOCIETY@gmail.com and we will process your RSVP.

As always, we hope to see you there!
Amber and Jenni, NHS vice-presidents



<https://www.facebook.com/neherbalsociety>

Member Spotlight: Rocky Bray



How did you learn about NHS? I found the Nebraska Herbal Society around six years ago in the things to do section of the *Lincoln Journal Star*. My first meeting I discovered about 50 or so kind and talented members, who enjoy raising and baking with herbs.

What is your favorite herb? Lavender - the fragrance is what I love. Alas, I've tried to raise it outdoors many times. Perhaps now that I am retired, I will pay more attention and can become successful at growing it.

Hobbies, passions. Baseball, I had hoped the Philadelphia Phillies would have made it back to the World Series. Third baseman Alec Bohm is a hometown boy from Omaha. Since they weren't, I was rooting for the Texas Rangers and was very happy that another underdog team won it.

Please tell us something you'd like us to know about you: Taking a break during covid, upon my return I was approached to become your treasurer. Having just completed two years of being on the board of directors at Spirit of America Federal credit union, I accepted the invitation. There was much to learn in this new position and a great way to learn about our members and what gifts they bring to the table. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served you and keep our pocketbook transparent to all members.

Feel free to tell us about your significant other, children, grandchildren, pets. Now that the torch has been passed (to another treasurer), I will be enjoying my time with Nadia, my beautiful Siberian husky and all my friends and family that I am so blessed to have.

Come join us

To join the Nebraska Herbal Society, send your name, address, phone number and email address to: Nebraska Herbal Society, PO Box 4493, Lincoln, NE 68504-0493. Single Membership is \$10/year, family memberships are \$15/year. Checks are payable to Nebraska Herbal Society. The NHS newsletter strives for publication monthly. Articles received after the deadline, typically the 8th of the month, will appear in a later issue. Everyone is welcome to send articles and information to neherbalsociety@gmail.com Attention Cheryl. Please do not format articles or recipes.

Disclaimer Information in this newsletter is intended for educational purposes only and should not be considered as a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment. Please consult with a healthcare provider before pursuing any herbal treatments.

Nebraska Herbal Society of Lincoln



To join the Nebraska Herbal Society of Lincoln, please complete the information and mail your check to: Nebraska Herbal Society Attn: Treasurer P.O. Box 4493 Lincoln, NE 68504-4493. Membership levels: Individual \$10____ Family \$15____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____ (important to include for newsletter)

May we have permission to publish your information in a membership directory? Yes____ No____

2023 NHS Officers, Board Members

Co-Presidents

Jill Kuhel
Janet Lindsteadt

Vice-Presidents

Amber Jones
Jenni Dougherty

Secretary

Pam Knott

Treasurer

Rocky Bray

Public Relations

Marilyne Phelps

Newsletter

Cheryl Alberts Irwin

Membership

Ann Lif
Kathy Dawes

Plant Sale

Janet Buck

Contact:

neherbalsociety@gmail.com

The purpose of NHS is to promote the culture, harvesting and uses of herbs, through a variety of activities to meet the interests of the membership.

Membership Corner, Ann Lif and Kathy Dawes

Hello NHS Friends!

NHS membership had a successful year! Thank you to all those who brought a friend and participated in our events. We added many new members this year. Kathy Dawes and I have been working to improve membership experiences this past year. We updated the membership name tags so members and visitors can read your badge and get to know one another. During meetings we introduce new members or visitors and provide a membership application to visitors. Please take time to introduce yourself to any new members or visitors so they feel welcome to our group. Share stories about our group and how they might become involved. This month's newest member is Michele Hodges. We were also blessed with a visitor from California, Ana Cartier (daughter-in-law to Kathy Cartier).



Michele Hodges

In 2023 all members were emailed a calendar of events and a bookmark to use at home. I promise it will be better next year, as we learn from the past. The newsletter includes a membership application if you have a friend who wishes to join. If they wish to join, they can complete it and mail it to the treasurer with payment.

We purchased a new hot water dispenser and Amber Jones donated one to the group to keep hot water going during the meeting. A new tea box was purchased, with the plan to add new teas and explore different flavors throughout the year.

The Holiday Luncheon and Gift Exchange is Dec. 2, 1-4 p.m. This year the luncheon is free for members and \$25 for nonmembers. For those wishing to participate, gifts for the gift exchange are to be no more than \$10. No white elephants, please. Wrap the gift and include a name tag.

PLEASE submit your RSVP to us before Nov. 23. You should have received an email invitation through a new reservation program, SignUPGenius. If this newer technology is confusing, feel free to email us your RSVP at neherbalsociety@gmail.com. I encourage you to try SignUpGenius. It is easy to use and we want to use it for future events.

As a reminder: Yearly dues payments are being received until Feb. 1. Please bring a check for \$10 for single membership or \$15 for family. You may also complete and mail a check to:

Nebraska Herbal Society
Treasurer: Attn: Rocky Bray
P.O. Box 4493
Lincoln, NE 68504-4493

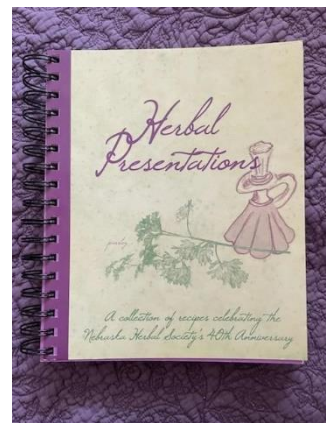
Please INVITE a FRIEND to a meeting!

Remembering Shirley Maly

Long time NHS member, Shirley Maly, 91, passed away on Oct. 18, 2023. She served on the NHS board and used her experience in communications effectively as publicity chair.



Shirley designed and created the artwork for the first NHS T-shirt and for the 40th anniversary T-shirt. She also contributed illustrations for the "Herbal Presentations" cookbook, a collection of recipes celebrating the NHS 40th anniversary published in 2017. We are forever grateful for her creativity and commitment to these projects!



Copywriting and publicity were her areas of expertise and in 1977 she

formed her independent marketing consulting firm, Creative Basics. At age 60, she joined the Peace Corps and served in Uruguay, empowering small business entrepreneurs and artisans in the broader marketing of their wares.



She retired to Lincoln in 1995. In 2007 she received the Lillian Carter Award presented by former President Jimmy Carter for her work promoting the Peace Corps.

In retirement Shirley traveled extensively, visiting well over a dozen countries across four continents. She recorded her adventures in personal journals and sketchbooks that she then published in two works, her book "Love Affair with the Americas" and an "Anytime Calendar."

She was involved in many other organizations including League of American Voters, American Marketing Association, American Women in Radio and TV, Professional Association of Home Based Business Owners, Lincoln City Library Board, Lincoln Literacy and Lincoln Artist's Guild.

Shirley touched the lives of hundreds across generational and cultural bounds. She wanted most to help people realize their dreams, and to see a smile on everyone's face. She believed in happy endings!

Services will be held Dec. 2, 2023, 12 p.m., at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln, 6300 A St.

by Legacy.com and Bonnie Bake

October Minutes, Joan Anderson-Mertz (substituting)

Jill Kuhel, Co-President: started the Oct. 28 meeting of 27 members and one guest present. She passed a sign-up sheet around for 2024 Herb of the Month. There will be four garden tours in May. Jill has two so far. Let her know if you would like to be added for a garden tour. Also, let Jill know if you have any ideas for meeting topics in 2024.

Officer Nominees: Jane McGee, President
Mary Andelt, Treasurer
Jill Kuhel and Jenni Dougherty, Program
Cheryl Alberts Irwin, Newsletter
Ann Lif and Kathy Dawes, Membership
Janet Buck and Bonnie Bake, Plant Sale (Janet requests another person to assist her in 2024.
Please contact her if you would be willing to help.)

Treasurer report, Rocky Bray: All books were in correct order and accounted for. Receipts for reimbursements were made and accepted with one pending. Rocky reminded us that reimbursements will be made only up to three months.

Newsletter, Cheryl Alberts: Some people are not getting emailed newsletters. Cheryl suggested putting neherbalsociety@gmail.com in contacts. November/December is next newsletter. Next meeting is Nov. 18.

Kathy Dawes, Membership: New returning member is Michele Hodges. Guest Ana is Kathy Cartier's daughter-in-law from California.

Amber Jones and Jenni Dougherty discussed the email invitation for the December luncheon, now set for 1-4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2. There was a minor glitch in the computer program but please sign up as soon as possible, before Nov. 23. Member meals are free, guests are \$25 each. If you wish to participate in the gift exchange, please bring a wrapped gift with nametag and no more than \$10. No white elephants. Kat from Beaver Crossing has not confirmed the catering job as of yet. [Note: Kat Davis later confirmed to cater.]

Herb of the month: Joan Leitner, lemon thyme, which goes by many names. It grows best in Zone 5, as a perennial herb. It is beautiful and can prevent bugs. It grows 12-18 inches tall, and is good for rock/retaining walls. It is great for soups, insect repellent and aromatherapy.

Program Member Demonstrations

Jenni Dougherty presented preserving and pressing flowers. Jenni showed us many methods including using a gel mold to create beautiful flower art pieces.

Susan and John Hanlon discussed lemongrass uses in soups, antiseptic, disinfectants and culinary flavoring.

Kathy Cartier showed and served herb teas. Kathy served delicious tea and described how she made teas using a French press or Mason jar and many flavorful herbs. Kathy will have a booth at St John's Craft Fair, 7601 Vine St., Nov. 18. She invited us to come after our Nov. 18 meeting until 3 p.m.

See next page for
demo photos.

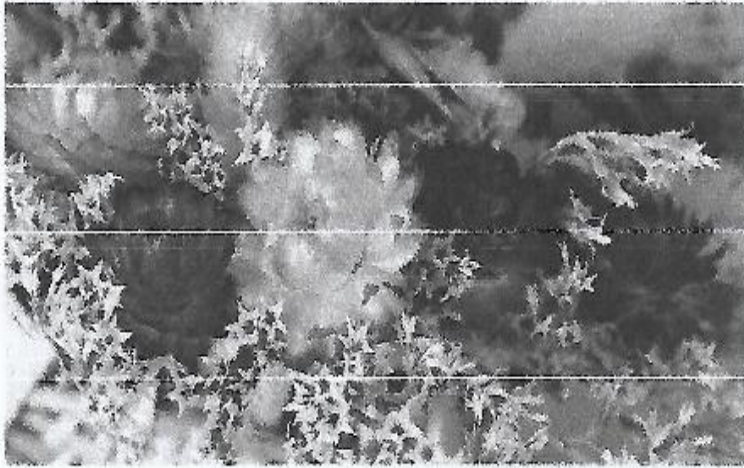


October demonstrations and discussions include Jenni Dougherty, above, pressed flowers; Joan Leitner, below, lemon thyme; John and Susan Hanlon, lemongrass; and Kathy Cartier, herbal tea made with a French press.

Photos: Cheryl Alberts



Drying, Pressing and Preserving Flowers



When growing a garden, it's important to remember to stop and smell the roses, because flowers are ephemeral and may be enjoyed for only so long. Put down those pruners, pull out a lawn chair, and soak in the beauty of the flowers. But wait! There are methods to preserve flowers, prolonging enjoyment beyond the lifespan of the bloom. With minimal effort and a perfectly timed snip, an ephemeral flower may be transformed into an eternal flower.

Pro-Tip: Timing is everything when it comes to drying flowers. Clip the blooms just before they fully open; otherwise the petals are more likely to fall off during the preservation process.

Here are three common methods for drying flowers. Choose the one that works best for the flowers in your garden and go for it.

1. Hang Dried



Use this method for grasses and flowers with a less-flat natural form, for example: roses, hydrangea, baby's breath, strawflower, yarrow, and lavender.

1. Remove the leaves and cut the stem to no shorter than six inches.
2. The stems may be hung individually or grouped in a small bouquet with rubber bands or twine.
3. Hang the flowers away from sunlight, to better preserve the color, and in a warm, dark, dry area with good air circulation, to keep the flowers from rotting. Hanging the flower upside-down is important because the stems will develop a crack in their neck or a distinct nod if dried upright or at an angle.
4. Allow the flowers to hang for two to three weeks, checking them occasionally to determine when they are completely dry to the touch.

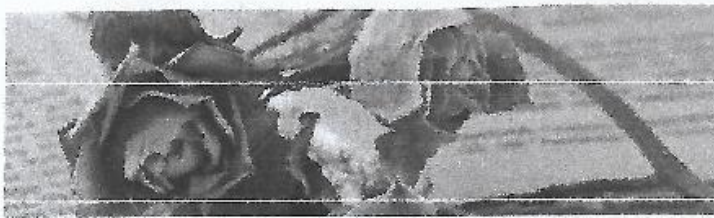
2. Press Dried



Use this method for delicate and naturally flat flowers, such as viola, lily-of-the-valley, leaves, geranium, and lilac.

1. Place the flowers on dry, non-glossy paper and arrange them in the exact pattern to be pressed. Take care not to overlap any flowers. Place a second sheet of dry paper on top of the arranged flowers. Please note that multiple layers may be stacked, so long as a layer of cardboard is placed between each paper/flower layer.
2. Put a heavy, evenly smooth object on top of the flowers. Large books, boxes or pieces of wood are ideal for this purpose.
3. Keep the layers weighted this way for two to three weeks. Replace the paper with fresh dry sheets after one week. Remove the weights and carefully take the flowers off the paper.

3. Desiccants





Use silica gel or a 1:1 borax-cornmeal mixture to retain truer color and form than pressing or hang drying flowers. Good flowers to dry using this method are cosmos, dahlia, camellia, roses, and zinnia.

1. Pour one inch of the desiccant in the bottom of a container with a lid.
2. Carefully place the flower top up in the container, and then gently pour more of the desiccant over the flower until it is covered by an extra inch of desiccant. The more carefully the flower is covered, the more true-to-form the flower will dry.
3. Allow the flower to set in the lidded container for two to five days with silica gel or 10 days with borax-cornmeal. When using the borax-cornmeal mix, do not over dry the flowers or they may burn. A brush may be used to gently remove residual desiccant sticking to the flower once removed.

Pro-Tip: Use dried flowers as stand-alone decorations or incorporate them into craft projects, but keep in mind dried flowers will retain their color and form best when displayed in a cool location that is away from sunlight.

If you enjoy crafting with natural materials then you'll want to experiment with making natural ink from plants. You can probably find nearly everything you need to get started in your garden, spice rack, or refrigerator!

Lemongrass

Lemongrass Vinegar

4 to 6 stalks lemongrass

(cut about 8 inches from bottom or slice into small pieces put into clean quart container w/tight fitting lid)

12 oz. rice vinegar

Instructions—place cut lemongrass into jar, pour vinegar over and seal with lid. Place in a dark, cool place. Shake container occasionally. Allow to stand for about 2 weeks. Then strain and bottle with a tight fitting lid. Use on green vegetables or fish.

Lemongrass Syrup (the recipe for this exotic syrup came to us from the Savory Restaurant in NY city)

1 cup sugar

1 cup water

2 lemongrass stalks (core only) sliced

Instructions—combine sugar, water and sliced lemongrass core in small saucepan. Simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring to dissolve sugar. Remove from heat and cool. Strain syrup into clean jar. Cover and keep in fridge. Use in mint julep for an exotic take on this classic. May be drizzled over pound cake, or over fruit, also to sweeten a glass of iced or hot tea.

Lemon Mint tea Concentrate

Fresh herbs: mint, lemon balm, lemon verbena and lemongrass

2 quarts water

Instructions: Gather and rinse about 4 cups fresh herbs. Chop mint, lemon balm and lemongrass. Strip leaves from lemon verbena and discard stems. Bring water to boil in non-reactive pan. Add herbs, cover, and remove from heat. Steep for 10 minutes. Strain and refrigerate. Dilute 2 to 4 times, depending preferred strength. Serve over ice, garnish with lemon slices and sprigs of fresh mint.

TEA RECIPES - Kathy Carrier

1 Teaspoon each:

Sources

- CHINA BLACK TEA
- CALENDULA
- ELDER BERRY
- HIBISCUS
- Lemon Verbena
- Passion Flower
- Peppermint
- Spearmint
- Red Raspberry
- Rose Hips
- CHAMOMILE
- LEMON BALM
- Hibiscus Flowers - Dried
- 1 Tea Bag - Green Tea

① Herbs & More
5740 Old Chenay
402-423-7733
Herbs & More.com

② Tamayta
4025 S 48th St.
402-560-0770

③ Green Leaf Tea Co.
2917 Pine Lake Rd. #D
Behind Davinci's
402-796-9327

- Berry Blast } From
- Mango Pear } Green Leaf Tea Co.
- 1/4 fresh sliced Lemon
- 1/2" fresh sliced Ginger

Use French Press or Mason Jar.
JAR - ADD INGREDIENTS
POUR Hot water to Fill -

* STEEP OVERNIGHT
STRAIN & ENJOY!